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### The Involvement of Women in Strengthening International Peace and Eliminating Racism and Racial Discrimination: Item 8 of the Provisional Agenda

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UNITED NATIONS



**WORLD CONFERENCE  
OF THE  
INTERNATIONAL WOMEN'S YEAR**

MEXICO CITY, 19 JUNE TO 2 JULY 1975

THE INVOLVEMENT OF WOMEN IN STRENGTHENING  
INTERNATIONAL PEACE AND ELIMINATING RACISM  
AND RACIAL DISCRIMINATION

Item 8 of the provisional agenda



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Report of the Secretary-General

Addendum

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VI. CONTRIBUTION OF WOMEN TO INTERNATIONAL CO-OPERATION  
AND THE STRENGTHENING OF INTERNATIONAL PEACE

1. The purposes of the United Nations as formulated in Article 1 of the Charter are:

"1. To maintain international peace and security, and to that end: to take effective collective measures for the prevention and removal of threats to the peace, and for the suppression of acts of aggression or other breaches of the peace, and to bring about by peaceful means, and in conformity with the principles of justice and international law, adjustment or settlement of international disputes or situations which might lead to a breach of the peace;

2. To develop friendly relations among nations based on respect for the principle of equal rights and self-determination of peoples, and to take other appropriate measures to strengthen universal peace;

3. To achieve international co-operation in solving international problems of an economic, social, cultural, or humanitarian character, and in promoting and encouraging respect for human rights and for fundamental freedoms for all without distinction as to race, sex, language, or religion; and

4. To be a centre for harmonizing the actions of nations in the attainment of these common ends."

2. In pursuit of these purposes the Members of the United Nations have undertaken the specific commitment to settle their international disputes by peaceful means and to refrain in their international relations from the threat or use of force (Article 2), to promote the establishment and maintenance of international peace and security with the least diversion for armaments of the world's human and economic resources (Article 26), and to seek a solution by negotiation, inquiry, mediation, conciliation, arbitration, judicial settlement ... in any dispute, the continuance of which is likely to endanger the maintenance of international peace and security (Article 33).

3. The promotion and protection of human rights for all is an essential condition for the maintenance and strengthening of international co-operation and peace, just as sustained international co-operation among all countries and peoples is required to achieve peace, justice and equity for all and to eliminate all sources of conflict. Structures and institutions which deny persons their human rights and dignity prevent justice from being realized; and systems which condemn people to substandard conditions of living are a denial of both human rights and human dignity. These conditions motivate people to resort to violence.

4. Recognition that disregard and contempt for human rights were among the causes of war led to the proclamation by the General Assembly of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (General Assembly resolution 217 (III) of 10 December 1948) as a common standard of achievement for all peoples and nations. The Declaration, which provides a basis for the relationship between human beings and States inter se, recognizes that:

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"I/t is essential, if man is not to be compelled to have recourse, as a last resort, to rebellion against tyranny and oppression, that human rights should be protected by the rule of law".

5. True international co-operation must be based, in accordance with the Charter of the United Nations and the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, on fully equal rights, the recognition of the dignity of the individual and appreciation of the human person, as well as on the observance of national independence and sovereignty, non-interference in the internal affairs of nations and the promotion and maintenance of a just world order based on the principle of equity among and within nations. International co-operation and peace require national independence and liberation, the elimination of colonialism and neo-colonialism, foreign occupation and apartheid, and racial discrimination in all its forms.

6. The General Assembly has agreed that economic as well as political and other relations among States shall be governed, inter alia, by the following principles: sovereignty, territorial integrity and political independence of States; sovereign equality of all States; non-aggression; non-intervention; mutual and equitable benefit; peaceful coexistence; equal rights and self-determination of peoples; peaceful settlement of disputes; remedying of injustices which have been brought about by force and which deprive a nation of the natural means necessary for its normal development; fulfilment in good faith of international obligations; respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms; no attempt to seek hegemony and spheres of influence; promotion of international social justice; international co-operation for development; free access to and from the sea by land-locked countries within the framework of the above principles. 1/

A. The historical perspective and current trends

7. Recorded history rarely mentions women. This may be due in part to the fact that history has been primarily a record written by men and reflecting the chief interests of men. It may also be due to the fact that women have usually been absent from ruling positions in the societies in which they lived and from those institutions where political decisions were taken. However, this situation should not obscure the fact that women, in all social strata and throughout history, have exercised a certain amount of power according to their social position, although usually less power than men at the same level. Indeed women of the elite in all eras have wielded substantial public power and historically have been the mediators in many societies, in particular through marriage alliance systems. Women of the aristocracy, after careful education and training, were often married to potential enemies of their country or kin. They had to survive, often in hostile courts, through their wits and skill in mediation, and they could not use

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1/ General Assembly resolution 3281 (XXIX) of 12 December 1974, Charter of Economic Rights and Duties of States (chapter I), adopted by 120 votes to 6 with 10 abstentions.



the threat of force. Outstanding women leaders have existed throughout history, especially royal women who have ruled in their own right and led their own armies; but these are few and far between.

8. On the whole, the anchoring effect of children meant that the vast majority of women remained in the limited society of home and family while men entered the public arenas. It was not until the second half of the last century that women actively began to seek entry into the public sphere along with the movement for recognition of their political rights.

9. Following the Napoleonic wars, a number of national and international peace societies were organized in Europe in which women took part along with men. Around the middle of the century, these societies held a series of international peace conferences which served to bring the concept of peace before the general public. In the United States of America women organized the first women's rights movement. While the moderates wanted equal rights with men and demanded that they be integrated into the male-dominated society from which they were excluded, the more radical among them rejected this limited goal. For them the fight for women's rights was part of a larger quest for social change. Believing that the ballot would be of little use to people too poor and too exploited to use it, these deeply committed activists sought to change basic social and political institutions through their active involvement in unionization, internationalist and peace movements and through efforts to change State, family and Church. For them, social change for women was part of a larger effort against all forms of exploitation to which they devoted their lives. <sup>2/</sup>

10. Out of the women's rights movement in the mid-nineteenth century, a strong international suffrage movement developed. Many of its members were pacifists, many socialists, and many were close to the trade union movement. In Hungary its leader was Rosika Schwimmer; in the Netherlands, Aletta Jacobs; in the United States of America, Carrie Chapman Catt. In Austria Bertha von Suttner wrote a novel, Lay Down Your Arms, based on her experiences in the Franco-Prussian war. She also helped to create a series of interparliamentary peace conferences and to establish the Austrian Society of the Friends of Peace. In 1905 she won the Nobel Peace Prize, becoming the first woman to achieve that honour.

11. As early as the autumn of 1900, a socialist congress was held in Paris. Two prominent women, Rosa Luxembourg and Clara Zetkin, presented a paper entitled, "The Peace of Nations, Militarism and the Elimination of Standing Armies", which called for international protest movements against militarism and war and, in particular, for the involvement of women and youth in the active struggle for peace.

12. The first International Conference of Socialist Women was held in 1907 and led to the formation of the International Women's Secretariat under the leadership of Clara Zetkin. Harbingers of the First World War had already appeared, and therefore

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<sup>2/</sup> Penina Migdal Glazer, "Organizing for Freedom", in Women: An Issue, Lee R. Edwards, Mary Heath and Lisa Baskin, eds. (Boston, Little, Brown and Company, 1972).



the purpose of the Second International Conference of Socialist Women that gathered in Copenhagen in 1910 was to expand the contacts between organized women's groups in various countries in order to mobilize large numbers of women in the fight not only for their rights and the welfare of their children, but also for peace in the world.

13. In March 1915, the International Socialist Women's Conference, held in Berne, was attended by 25 women delegates from Germany, England, France, Holland, Italy, Poland, Russia and Switzerland. This Conference was the first step towards the common struggle to end the World War which had been unleashed in August 1914. One month later in April 1915, a Congress of Women, called by the International Suffrage Alliance, <sup>3/</sup> met at The Hague. Despite the difficulties of war-time travel, 1,400 women gathered from 12 countries - belligerent as well as neutral countries - under the chairmanship of Jane Addams, a famous United States social worker and suffrage leader who received the Nobel Prize for Peace in 1931. The purpose of the Congress was to find some means to stop the slaughter and develop a programme for a lasting peace. Out of this meeting developed the Women's International League for Peace and Freedom, so named at the second congress in Zurich in 1919. Believing that the Versailles Treaty contained the seeds of future wars, the International Suffrage Alliance called this second Congress to plead for a just treaty of peace and universal disarmament. Personal envoys went directly from the meeting to call upon all the statesmen assembled at Versailles, but without success.

14. Between the two World Wars women's organizations waged an active struggle for collective security and the preservation of world peace and against aggression. The long-delayed League of Nations Conference on Reduction and Limitation of Armaments was held in Geneva in 1932. The Women's International League for Peace and Freedom collected 6 million signatures on a disarmament petition that was presented to that Conference. Since that time the widely accepted goal of women's peace organizations has been general and complete disarmament under international supervision.

15. Women also participated actively in the organization and work of the World Anti-War Congress, which was held in Amsterdam in August 1932 under the slogan "War against War", as well as in the European Anti-Fascist Congress, which was held in Paris in 1933.

16. In August 1934, about one year after Hitler came into power in Germany, a World Congress of Women was held in Paris, at which the Permanent International Women's Committee to Combat Fascism was formed, a committee that continued to function until September 1939. Women and girls came to the Congress from all parts of the world; women of a wide variety of political leanings and religious convictions united in the determination to fight against fascism and war.

17. The Second World War was a time of great testing for the members of international peace organizations. Many men and women felt that the search for

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<sup>3/</sup> This organization later became the International Alliance of Women.



peace had to be set aside for the time being in order to stop the forces of fascism. Others clung to an absolute pacifist position, and some struggled bravely to confront fascism through non-violent resistance.

18. Women contributed significantly to the battle against fascism. They stood shoulder to shoulder with their men folk in armies, partisan units and resistance movements, as medical workers, reconnaissance and liaison agents and as soldiers. Moreover, women replaced men at plants, factories and in the fields. Women fell in battle and died under torture in the concentration camps and prisons or fell victims to disease, starvation and toil that was beyond their strength. Many of them risked their lives giving aid to those who needed it. Many died so that others might live.

19. A significant feature of contemporary society, which is part of the trend of women's active involvement in societal crises, is women's participation in the struggle for the liberation of their countries and peoples. This involvement, which manifested itself in the fight against the forces of fascism during the Second World War, has been demonstrated on many occasions during the last decades in connexion with the struggle for independence from colonial rule.

20. In the movement of resistance to colonialism women have always shown themselves to be no less resolute than men. They made their homes available for clandestine meetings and they transported and secretly distributed propaganda material. They concealed fighters sought by the police, served as liaison agents, organized aid to political prisoners, and were directly involved in clandestine liberation work. When the struggle entered the phase of armed conflict and guerrilla groups were formed, women joined the guerrillas and learned to handle arms; many of these women were killed. Other women furnished guerrilla groups with information on movements of enemy troops, provisioned the front and rendered medical assistance.

21. Such active, recurrent and often massive participation of women has had the effect of accelerating the process that brought about desired political change. In this sense it may be said that in the past 30 years women have been strong agents of political change in times of war or violent confrontation.

22. The main characteristics of their participation were that (a) the traditional division of labour between the sexes was set aside and women participated in all activities related to the struggle and at all levels; (b) women's participation was generous and spontaneous; it was the normal response to a crisis situation, the solution of which was vital to their countries and (c) once the crisis was over the contribution of women usually went unrewarded in terms of the allocation of positions of power within the political structure; as a result, women have not played a political role commensurate with the role they played during the crisis. 4/

23. Another important feature of contemporary society is the increased commitment of women, as individuals and in groups, to the cause of peace through efforts directly related to the general promotion of conditions conducive to peace, to the cessation of situations of armed conflict and to the alleviation of human suffering brought about by such situations.

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4/ See chapter I of the present report (E/CONF.66/3).



24. Despite achievements such as the conclusion of certain limited treaties for the control and limitation of armaments, the establishment of nuclear-free zones, the cessation of hostilities in specific instances, often through the good offices of the United Nations, some reduction of international tension, and a measure of improvement in the international political climate, major threats to peace continue to exist. Such factors as foreign occupation, colonialism, racism and apartheid have not been eliminated; aggressive acts still occur; and the arms race is essentially unchecked. Countless millions of people are still undernourished, uneducated, unemployed and wanting in many of the basic necessities of life, a situation that contributes to the aggravation of world tension.

25. Although general and complete disarmament under effective international control is a stated objective of the international community, there is no agreed programme for the Disarmament Decade proclaimed by the General Assembly in 1970 and coinciding with the Second United Nations Development Decade. It is estimated that if annual military expenditures continue to absorb their 1970 percentage of the world Gross National Product, they could well reach the level of \$300-350 billion (at 1970 prices) by the end of the decade, with a total outlay for the decade of some \$750 billion more than was spent from 1961 to 1970. As a group of experts on the arms race and military expenditures has described the present situation,

"It is no exaggeration to say that the arms race has finally provided man with the means of putting an end to his species ... The threat of ultimate disaster is has generated is by far the most dangerous single peril the world faces today - far more dangerous than poverty or disease, far more dangerous than either the population explosion or pollution - and it far outweighs whatever short-term advantage armaments may have achieved in providing peoples with a sense of national security." 5/

#### B. The part played by women's groups and organizations

26. From the beginning of the women's peace movement, universality in membership has been a goal. The participants have been women of varied racial, ideological and political backgrounds united by the common will to struggle for peace, disarmament, national independence, social progress and democracy. Convinced that public opinion can influence the development of world events, numerous women's national and international organizations and groups have repeatedly supported initiatives directed towards the eradication of situations conducive to armed conflicts, towards the cessation of the arms race, the development of friendly relations among nations and the right of all peoples to live in peace and liberty.

27. It should also be emphasized that women's non-governmental organizations have always stood for non-violence and activity on behalf of human welfare, including

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5/ Economic and Social Consequences of the Arms Race and of Military Expenditures (United Nations publication, Sales No.: E.72.IX.16, para. 112).



activities at the grass-roots level. There are at present some 47 women's international non-governmental organizations with national affiliates in various countries. Their activities include religious, educational, and professional matters, international relations and sports. The first group of organizations established between 1880 and 1901 included mainly religious, social-welfare oriented groups and general educational women's clubs. Gradually there was a shift from these interests to organizations more concerned with international relations and professional matters 6/ (see the annex to this chapter).

28. The activities of numerous women's groups and organizations in recent decades have followed two main directions. On the one hand, they have pressed actively for peace and disarmament, struggled against colonialism, apartheid, racism and racial discrimination; on the other hand, they have sought to provide assistance to victims of military conflicts and repression. These activities have been conducted at the international, regional and national levels and were concerned mainly with:

(a) The strengthening of an international order through support of international organizations and positive action to improve their effectiveness in the prevention of war and the maintenance of peace;

(b) The achievement of general and complete disarmament under international supervision, particularly through active opposition to nuclear testing and to the development and use of chemical, biological and radiological warfare agents;

(c) The initiation of or active participation in meetings and gatherings directed towards the general promotion of peace;

(d) The improvement of the dialogue and co-operation of women's groups of different political and ideological persuasion on key problems relating to the of peace and international co-operation through meetings, conferences, exchange of visitors and so on;

(e) The forceful and often striking expression of dissent from governmental policies - for example, the organization of and/or participation in demonstrations to protest war measures, support to young resisters, visits to belligerent countries and co-operation with other women's groups opposed to war, the sending of fact-finding missions to areas of armed conflict to investigate specific conditions or to ascertain the implementation of armistice agreements;

(f) The enlightenment of public opinion and the development of greater sensitivity to the importance of issues that have a bearing on the peaceful coexistence of peoples and nations through a variety of informational and educational activities.

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6/ Elise Boulding, "Female alternatives to hierarchical systems, past and present: A critique of women's NGO's in the light of history", International Women's Year Studies on Women, No. 3 (Program of Research on General Social and Economic Dynamics, Institution of Behavioral Science, University of Colorado, February 1975).



29. Some recent examples of these activities are given below, based on the information available to the Secretary-General. Among the women's international forums for peace that have taken place at the international level, the following should be mentioned: the fiftieth Anniversary Congress of the Women's International League for Peace and Freedom (WILPF), which was held at The Hague in 1965 and launched a world drive to ask women to use their power to end the war in South-East Asia; and the international congresses of the WILPF in New Delhi, India, in December 1971 and in Birmingham, England, in July 1974.

30. Another major forum where women actively participated was the World Congress of Peace Forces for International Security and Disarmament, for National Independence, Co-operation and Peace, which took place in Moscow in October 1973. The work of the Congress was directed along two lines: defence of the important achievements of the peace forces in combating war, poverty and ignorance; and elaboration of a programme of united action to create a durable basis for the peaceful future of mankind. Women shared actively in the preparations for the Congress and in the Congress itself. There were 96 national women's organizations present from 81 countries, and 9 international women's organizations. Leaders of the women's organizations, women prominent in public life, political leaders, members of parliaments, artists and writers met at the Congress. On 29 October, within the framework of the Congress, a meeting was held of women delegates who represented different women's organizations. The participants of the meeting made concrete proposals regarding co-operation and joint action for the implementation of the decisions taken by the Congress.

31. A seminar entitled "Women of the World United for Peace: Disarmament and its Social Consequences" was convened at United Nations Headquarters, 7 to 9 May 1975 by the Women's International Democratic Federation, the Women's International League for Peace and Freedom, and the Jane Addams Peace Association. The substantive goals of the seminar were to demonstrate the social and economic costs of militarism; generate specific suggestions for governmental action; mobilize public opinion, especially through women, on the need for total world disarmament; develop strategies for getting more women into leadership roles in all levels of government, business and labour where they would be in a position to initiate non-militaristic policies; establish machinery for an international network of women to exchange information, suggest programmes for action and plan joint programmes for peace.

32. International forums with active participation of women's groups and organizations have often been devoted to the struggle against apartheid and colonialism. Thus, in Geneva in September 1974, an international conference of non-governmental organizations against apartheid and colonialism in Africa was convened by the special Non-Governmental Organization Committee on Racism, Racial Discrimination, Apartheid and Decolonization, under the chairmanship of the General Secretary of the World Peace Council. One hundred and ninety participants, representing international and national organizations, including 11 intergovernmental organizations and 29 Governments, were present as guests. Representatives of women's organizations and liberation movements also attended. The Geneva Conference began a new phase of co-operation between Governments and non-governmental and intergovernmental organizations. The significance of the Conference lay not only in the expression of solidarity and support for the

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liberation movements in southern Africa, but also in demonstrating that the struggle against apartheid was part of the fundamental objective of social progress and world peace.

33. An example of bilateral contacts directed towards strengthening peace and co-operation between peoples was a series of conferences between a small group of women from the Soviet Union and the United States of America, started at Bryn Mawr in the United States in 1961 under the aegis of the Women's International League for Peace and Freedom. These conferences sought to promote mutual understanding. Since then, women from the United States have met with women in Latin America, Poland, Israel and the Arab countries. Such visits have helped to foster a greater sense of internationalism.

34. Among activities organized at the regional level by women's groups and organizations, mention should be made of the Inter-American Women's Congress held in Bogotá, Colombia, in 1970 and organized by the WILPF, and of the fourth Congress of the African Women's Conference, which took place in Dakar in 1974.

35. Delegates from 33 countries heard the report presented by the General Secretary, underlining the resolve of African women to take part in the emancipation of the peoples of Africa. It recalled the successes achieved by the African Women's Conference during its 12 years of work, which formed part of the new phase introduced by the liberation of a large number of countries from colonial subjugation. The report also dwelt on the struggle of African peoples against the racist régimes in southern Africa. The Congress expressed its solidarity with peoples fighting for peace, democracy and national independence and against racism, colonialism, apartheid, racial discrimination, foreign occupation and domination.

36. The women of Europe repeatedly put forward initiatives directed towards easing tension in Europe and solving problems connected with peace and co-operation on the European continent. For instance, there were the regional conferences of women of European countries held in Ystad (Sweden, June 1970), Malente (the Federal Republic of Germany, October 1970), Moscow (September 1971), Dortmund (the Federal Republic of Germany, November 1971), Tihany (Hungary, March 1972) and in Dipoli (Finland, 1973). At each of these conferences the participants represented numerous women's organizations of different political trends; and members of parliament, scientists, trade union officials, housewives, intellectuals and women workers actively discussed ways for establishing a lasting peace and co-operation on the European continent. Such conferences promote unity among European women's organizations and enable them to compare their points of view and establish better understanding and co-operation among themselves. In spite of substantial differences in political outlook, the participants of the regional European conferences were unanimous in their objective of preserving peace.

37. Women's organizations also took an active part at the meeting entitled "Peace and security in Asia, a vital task of our times", held in Samarkand (the USSR) in September 1974 and organized by the Afro-Asian People's Solidarity Organization. The participants included more than 60 delegates from 30 Asian countries and six international organizations, including women's organizations. The

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final document of the meeting, which was unanimously adopted, contained an appeal to the social and political forces of Asia to take action to create an atmosphere of peace and neighbourly relations and co-operation among the countries of Asia in economic, cultural, educational and other fields in order to bring about lasting security in the continent.

38. At the national level, activities undertaken by women's groups, national organizations or relevant sections of international organizations include the collection of petitions, the organization of demonstrations, meetings and gatherings; the creation of pressure groups; the organization of campaigns principally by means of the mass media in defence and support of victims of repression. Work conducted at the national level also includes the civic and political education of women with a view to stimulating women's awareness of global issues and enlightening them in the spirit of social progress, international co-operation and friendship between peoples.

39. Women's groups, national and international organizations have also been deeply concerned over the situation and the suffering of women and children in cases of armed conflict between States or within countries and in the struggle for peace, self-determination, national liberation and independence. They have provided assistance in many forms, including help for refugees, medical, child-care and educational services, rehabilitation programmes and material and financial help. They have also been active in mobilizing world public opinion in support of women and children in situations of emergency and armed conflict. Examples of such aid are described in two reports (E/CN.6/561 and Add.1 and 2; E/CN.6/586) considered by the United Nations Commission on the Status of Women. These examples were provided to the Secretary-General by the following non-governmental organizations: Amnesty International, International Council of Women, Friends World Committee for Consultation, International Catholic Child Bureau, International Council of Social Democratic Women, International Defense and Aid Fund, International Federation of Resistance Movements, World Confederation of Organizations of the Teaching Profession, World Young Women's Christian Association.

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C. The involvement of women in United Nations efforts to promote international co-operation and in strengthening international peace

40. The involvement of women in United Nations efforts to promote international co-operation and in strengthening international peace may be considered from two main points of view - namely, the extent to which they have participated in policy and other measures directed to these ends, especially in such areas as peace-keeping, disarmament and related matters, decolonization, and economic, social and humanitarian matters; and the extent to which measures adopted have taken into account the particular situation of women, especially in conditions of emergency and armed conflict.

Extent of women's participation in United Nations decisions and policy measures

41. The very limited participation of women in United Nations organs and bodies dealing with questions of international security, peace and disarmament is a reflection of the situation obtaining at the national level, where few women participate in the decision-making process as it relates to these important issues and to more general political issues. For example, the Security Council, which is the United Nations organ having primary responsibility for the peaceful settlement of disputes, has been presided over only once by a woman in her capacity as Permanent Representative of her country (Jeanne Martin Cissé of Guinea, November 1972). Similarly, over the years very few women attended the meetings of the Conference of the Committee on Disarmament. When they did, it was in an advisory capacity, except in one case in which a woman twice headed the delegation representing her country. No woman was included as a member of the group of 14 experts appointed by the Secretary-General following General Assembly resolution 2667 (XXV) of 7 December 1970 in which the Assembly called upon him to prepare a report on the economic and social consequences of the arms race and of military expenditures. Another group of nine consultant experts appointed by the Secretary-General in pursuance of General Assembly resolution 2685 (XXV) of 11 December 1970 on the economic and social consequences of disarmament included one woman member who served as chairman.

42. The representation of women at the regular sessions of the General Assembly has been limited but has increased somewhat throughout the years. At the first session of the General Assembly, for example, held in January-February 1946, out of 51 States Members of the United Nations, 11 appointed women as members of their delegations. Very few attended as representatives. Most were advisers. At the eleventh session in 1956, 30 women attended as representatives or alternates; at the fourteenth session in 1959, there were 41 women representatives or alternate representatives; at the twentieth session in 1965, the number of women in this capacity increased to 85; at the twenty-fifth session in 1970, the number reached 120; at the twenty-ninth session, in 1974, it was 159, while the number of men serving in the same capacity was 1,922. Thus, at the last session of the General Assembly, the percentage of women representatives and alternates was over 13 per cent of the total.

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43. The distribution of women in the Main Committees of the General Assembly has always been very uneven. The Third Committee, which deals with Social, Humanitarian and Cultural Matters, has consistently had the highest representation. The table below shows the distribution of women delegates (R: Representative and A: Alternate) for certain years during the past decade.

<u>General Assembly committee</u>	<u>1965</u>		<u>1968</u>		<u>1969</u>		<u>1970</u>		<u>1971</u>		<u>1974</u>	
	<u>R</u>	<u>A</u>	<u>R</u>	<u>A</u>	<u>R</u>	<u>A</u>	<u>R</u>	<u>A</u>	<u>R</u>	<u>A</u>	<u>R</u>	<u>A</u>
First (Political and Security)	1	4	3	3	4	4	3	3	4	6	5	9
Special Political	2	1	0	0	3	3	4	5	2	4	5	10
Second (Economic and Financial)	3	1	1	3	3	6	8	5	7	10	4	11
Third (Social, Humanitarian and Cultural)	26	17	29	24	36	17	42	31	46	33	44	25
Fourth (Trust and Non-Self-Governing Territories)	5	2	1	4	0	5	3	5	6	10	11	9
Fifth (Administrative and Budgetary)	0	5	3	2	2	4	3	5	2	8	6	7
Sixth (Legal)	1	3	2	6	2	4	2	1	4	6	6	7

44. Women have rarely been elected officers of the Main Committees of the General Assembly except in the case of the Third Committee where they have frequently served as chairman, vice-chairman and rapporteur. Two women were elected President of the General Assembly in 1953 and in 1969, at the eighth and twenty-fourth sessions respectively (Vijaya Lakshmi Pandit of India and Angie Brooks of Liberia).

45. The participation of women at the special sessions of the General Assembly presents a similar pattern. At the first special session in April-May 1947, which dealt with the question of Palestine, only one woman attended in the capacity of adviser. At the second special session held in April-May 1948, which dealt with the same subject, three women from three different Member States attended also as advisers. At the third special session, held in August 1961 on the question of Bizarte, despite the growing number of United Nations Members at that time, only seven women from seven countries attended; all except two served

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as advisers. At the fourth special session, held in May-June 1963 on the United Nations financial situation, and at the fifth special session in April 1967, nearly the same number of women - 19 and 20 from 16 and 17 Member States respectively - served as representatives, alternates and advisers. At the sixth special session, held in April 1974 on raw materials, 36 women attended from 26 countries as representatives, alternates and advisers.

United Nations concern for the situation of women in emergency and armed conflict

46. As a result of recommendations made at the 1968 Tehran Conference on Human Rights, 7/ the United Nations embarked on a series of studies on the protection of human rights in armed conflict, which have been carried out in close co-operation with the International Committee of the Red Cross. Paralleling these studies, the Commission on the Status of Women on its own initiative took up the question of "the protection of women and children in emergency and armed conflict in the struggle for peace, self-determination, national liberation and independence". It has included an item on this question in the agenda of each session since 1969, examining it from two main points of view: (a) the protection of women and children under international humanitarian law, which has been closely linked with the more general studies carried out on the protection of human rights in armed conflict; 8/ and (b) the condition of women and children in particular situations of emergency and armed conflict.

47. The International Committee of the Red Cross prepared two draft additional protocols to the Geneva Conventions of 1949, intended to reaffirm and strengthen in various respects the humanitarian law in force at present. 9/ These instruments are still under consideration by Governments.

48. The Third and Fourth Geneva Conventions, relating to the treatment of prisoners of war and to the protection of civilian persons in time of war respectively, contain some provisions regarding the protection of women and children in international armed conflict (for example, the Fourth Geneva Convention, article 16 on the general protection of the wounded and sick; article 17 on evacuation; article 24 on special measures in favour of children; article 27 on general observations concerning treatment; article 50 concerning children; article 68 (4) on the death penalty). As far as non-international

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7/ Final Act of the International Conference of Human Rights (United Nations publication, sales No. E.68.XIV.2), resolution XXIII.

8/ Subsequent reports were issued in A/8781 and Corr.1; A/9669 and Add.1; and A/9215 (vols. I and II).

9/ For the text of the draft protocols, see International Committee of the Red Cross, Draft Additional Protocols to the Geneva Conventions of August 12, 1949 (Geneva, October 1973).



armed conflicts are concerned, article 3, which is common to all four Geneva Conventions, provides for the protection of war victims, but it does not include any special provisions with respect to women and children (E/CN.6/561, annex).

49. The two draft additional protocols that deal with the protection of victims of international and non-international armed conflict both contain provisions concerning the protection of women and children. 10/ The draft protocols were first considered at a conference of government experts convened by the International Committee of the Red Cross in May 1972. They have subsequently been reviewed in 1974 and 1975 at two sessions of the Diplomatic Conference on the Reaffirmation and Development of International Humanitarian Law, convened by the Swiss Federal Council (the Government of the State depositary of the Geneva Conventions) at Geneva. A third session will be held from 26 April to 10 June 1976, when it is hoped that the protocols will be finally adopted. The views of the Commission on the Status of Women have been brought to the attention of these meetings.

50. As a direct outcome of recommendations of the Commission on the Status of Women, the Declaration on the Protection of Women and Children in Emergency and Armed Conflict in the Struggle for Peace, Self-Determination, National Liberation and Independence was adopted by the General Assembly at its twentieth-ninth session in its resolution 3318 (XXIX) of 14 December 1974. The Declaration proclaims as criminal all forms of repression and cruel and inhuman treatment of women and children committed by belligerents during military operations or in occupied territories, and condemns attacks and bombings on civilian population, as well as the use of chemical and bacteriological weapons.

51. With regard to the condition of women and children in particular situations of armed conflict and emergency, the Secretary-General has submitted reports to the Commission on the Status of Women based on information contained in United Nations documents (E/CN.6/561 and Add.1 and 2) and also on information furnished by Governments and non-governmental organizations in consultative status with the Economic and Social Council (E/CN.6/586). Such reports will continue to be submitted to the Commission at every other session in accordance with Economic and Social Council resolution 1688 (LII) of 2 June 1972 and the question of the

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10/ International Committee of the Red Cross, Draft Additional Protocol to the Geneva Conventions of August 12, 1949 and Relating to the Protection of Victims of International Armed Conflicts (Geneva, October 1973) (article 65 on fundamental guarantees; article 67 on the protection of women; article 68 on the protection of children; and article 69 on the evacuation of children); and International Committee of the Red Cross, Draft Additional Protocol to the Geneva Conventions of August 12, 1949 and Relating to the Protection of Victims of Non-International Armed Conflicts (Geneva, October 1973) (article 6 on fundamental guarantees; article 8 (2(d)) on persons whose liberty has been restricted; article 10 on penal prosecutions, and article 52 on privileged treatment in favour of children).



protection of women and children in emergency and armed conflict is included in the Commission's current work programme.

D. Suggested measures to increase the involvement of women in international co-operation and the strengthening of international peace

52. Women have demonstrated their conviction of the need to develop a strong and more effective impetus to peace and the development of friendly relations among nations, and the need for general and complete disarmament and the elimination of colonialism, neo-colonialism, foreign domination and alien subjugation, apartheid and racial discrimination.

53. Women of all countries and races and from all social strata, irrespective of their ideological and political views or religious beliefs, should unite in their efforts to achieve these goals, and every encouragement and recognition should be given to women as individuals and in groups, in national and international organizations, that are striving to achieve these aims.

54. All measures directed towards involving more women and increasing their representation in policy-making bodies at the national, regional and international levels, particularly in bodies responsible for policy making on these vital issues, should be encouraged with a view to achieving equitable distribution of women and men in all such bodies. Special efforts are needed to increase the numbers of qualified women in high ranking positions in foreign ministries, in the security and military establishments of their countries and in all international forums where the above questions are discussed, in particular at meetings of the organizations of the United Nations system, including the Security Council and all conferences on disarmament and international peace, and other regional bodies.

55. Women as individuals and in groups should give increasing support to all efforts to end the arms race and urge each Government to review its arms budget, reduce military spending, and use the funds thus freed for needed social purposes. Women should actively help to arouse public opinion in favour of effective disarmament and in favour of the achievement of further progress in development, especially by revealing the striking contrast between the resources used for military purposes and the unfilled needs of development.

56. Women should call upon Governments to support existing international treaties, and also the proposals submitted to the United Nations on the creation of nuclear-free zones, the proposals relative to the prohibition of weapons of mass destruction and on the respect for international and humanitarian law as applicable in armed conflicts, particularly in respect of the protection of women and children.

57. Women should support the proposed United Nations Disarmament Conference and urge that a date be set for the Conference at the next United Nations General

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Assembly to provide a forum for all countries, large and small, whether or not possessing nuclear weapons, for all interested non-governmental organizations and for women and men alike. Women should actively support the convening of a non-governmental conference on disarmament where women and men should also be equitably represented. This conference should be held at least six months prior to the United Nations Disarmament Conference in order to transmit its findings to the United Nations Conference.

58. Women should initiate and support all activities directed towards the defence of ethical conduct and humanitarian concerns among all persons concerned with matters that relate to peace and international co-operation at the national, regional and international levels, and they should encourage individuals and groups to speak out against violence and war and in favour of peace and the establishment of friendly relations among peoples and nations. The mass communications media should be urged to promote education for peace among the public at large, to substitute for violence and war the glorification of peace, to spread knowledge of the consequences of wars in terms of human suffering, death tolls, destruction of the land, cities and villages, moral depravity and toleration of vice, and to show the alarming discrepancy between world expenditures for armaments and aid to poorer segments of the population and poorer nations.

59. Women and men should be encouraged to promote the education and enlightenment of youth about all the issues mentioned above. Young people should also be taught the spirit of equality and friendship between all races, nationalities and countries of the world, and the spirit of respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms for all individuals and for the cultural heritage of different peoples and countries. They should also be taught that peace must be universal and that the destinies of the countries and peoples of the globe are closely interwoven. The teaching of history might be re-examined with a view to emphasizing the accomplishments made for the good of humanity rather than the deeds of war, conquest and domination, and explaining the various forces essential to collective existence. Such an interdisciplinary and global approach to learning would enable future generations to acquire a true sense of the imperatives that shape the evolution of humanity and of the necessity for interdependence of peoples and nations.

60. Women recognize that peace today is no longer a negative demand that there should be no war, but a positive demand resulting from the harmonization of the activities of the various countries. Peace will depend less and less on the balance of power in the traditional sense and more and more on dynamic association among countries directed towards development, progress, mutual assistance and equality.

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# Annex

## FOUNDING DATES FOR WOMEN'S NON-GOVERNMENTAL ORGANIZATIONS AND NUMBER OF SECTION MEMBERSHIPS

Organization category	1880-1901	1900-1915	1916-1930	1931-1945	1946-1970
<u>Religious</u>	WYWCA a/ (81) WWCTU (59)	GB (40) ICJW (21) IULCW (9) SJIA (12) WUCWO (82)		WFMW (20)	IFMW (27)
<u>International relations</u>		IAW (45) ICSDW (34) WILPF (21)	ACWW (67) PPSAWA (14) WIZO (51)	WIDF (97)	AAWC (35) EUW (12) FAWA (11)
<u>Professional</u>	ICN (74)	IFHE (63)	ICM (42) IFBPW (52) IFUW (56) IFWLC (39) MWIA (37) NNF (5) ODI (12) SIA (48) ZI (44)	IFWL (68) WAVE (11)	IAWHPJ (22) ICWES (11) IUWA (32) PAMWA (13) WEGN (12)
<u>Educational</u>	GFWC (50) ICW (64)	IALC (13)	AI (12) IIW (42) WAGGGS (101)		WMM (46)
<u>Sports</u>			IFWHA (34)		IAPESGW (58) IWCC (8)

Source: Compiled from Yearbook of International Organizations, 1973 and Yearbook of International Organizations, 1974 (Brussels, Union of International Associations, 1973 and 1974).

a/ Key to initials of women's non-governmental organizations is provided on the following page.



Key to initials of women's non-governmental organizations

Initials	Organization name
AAWC	All African Women's Conference
ACWW	Associated Country Women of the World
AI	Altrusa International
EUW	European Union of Women
FAWA	Federation of Asian Women's Associations
GB	Girls' Brigade
GFWC	General Federation of Women's Clubs
IA	International Association of Lyceum Clubs
IAPESGW	International Association of Physical Education and Sports for Women
IAW a/	International Alliance of Women
IAWHPJ	International Association of Women and Home Page Journalists
ICJW	International Council of Jewish Women
ICM	International Confederation of Midwives
ICN	International Council of Nurses
ICSOW b/	International Council of Social Democratic Women
ICW	International Council of Women
ICWES	International Conference of Women Engineers and Scientists
IFBPW	International Federation of Business and Professional Women
IFHE	International Federation for Home Economics
IFMW	International Federation of Mazdaznan Women
IFWHA	International Federation of Women Hockey Associations
IFWL	International Federation of Women Lawyers
IFWLC	International Federation of Women in Legal Careers
IFUW	International Federation of University Women
IIW	International Inner Wheel
IULCW	International Union of Liberal Christian Women
IUWA	International Union of Women Architects
IWCA	International Women's Cricket Association
MWIA	Medical Women's International Association
NNF	Northern Nurses Federation
ODI	Open Door International
PAMWA	Pan-American Medical Women's Alliance
PPSAWA	Pan Pacific and Southeast Asia Women's Association
SIA	Soroptimist International Association
SJIA	St. Joan's International Alliance
WAGGGS	World Association of Girl Guides and Girl Scouts
WAVE	World Association of Women Executives
WEGN	West European Group of Nurses
WFMW	World Federation of Methodist Women
WIDF	Women's International Democratic Federation
WILPF	Women's International League for Peace and Freedom

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Initials	Organization name
WIZO	Women's International Zionist Organization
WMM	World Movement of Mothers
WUCWO	World Union of Catholic Women's Organizations
WWCTU	World's Women's Christian Temperance Union
WYWCA	World Young Women's Christian Association
ZI	Zonta International

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a/ The original name for IAW was International Women Suffrage Alliance.

b/ The original name for ICSDW was International Socialist Women's Secretariat.

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